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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 004112

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TURKISH PM ERDOGAN'S JULY 27-29 TRIP TO IRAN: U.S.
DEMARCHÉ ON NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, TERRORISM, NATURAL GAS

REF: STATE 157900

Classified By: (U) CDA Robert Deutsch; reasons: 1.4 b,d.

11. (C) In delivering reftel demarche July 22 to MFA DDG for South Asia Evirgen, polcounselor noted our understanding that Turkey shares U.S. views on the need for sharp improvement in Iranian behavior. The USG has strong interest in seeing PM Erdogan deliver crisp, unambiguous messages to Tehran regarding nuclear proliferation and terrorism; we also expect Turkey to take account of ILSA and to refuse any project to transship Iranian natural gas, or other origin natural gas through Iran, to western Europe. Charge delivered demarche in parallel to ruling AKP MP Egemen Bagis, a foreign policy advisor to Erdogan; Bagis undertook to pass the demarche to Erdogan.

12. (C) Noting that he was preparing MFA draft talking points for Erdogan, Evirgen commented that he could not be certain how strongly Erdogan would deliver the messages. Nevertheless, Evirgen reiterated standard GOT preoccupation with Iran's nuclear program and the GOT position that Iran should comply with IAEA and ratify additional protocol.

13. (C) Evincing surprise that Iran would not be working for stability in Iraq, given that achievement of stability would be the best and quickest way to ensure departure of foreign forces, he noted that Turkey always raises terrorism in discussions with Iran.

14. (C) Regarding the natural gas project, Evirgen reiterated that Turkey feels under constant pressure from both Iran and western European countries to accede to a pipeline transshipment project. Moreover, the Iranians assert they have alternatives, either LNG shipments through the Gulf or by a proposed pipeline through Armenia, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine. On a broader plane, increased Turco-Iranian commerce would help open Iran to western influences. At the same time, Evirgen averred, Turkey, like the U.S., would prefer a pipeline directly from Caspian and Central Asian producers, but these producers continue to drag their feet.
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